



10 years of support for the homeless

This autumn marks the tenth anniversary of the Merton Homelessness Project.

Over the last decade our dedicated volunteers have provided nutritious meals of legendary quality for up to 85 homeless and vulnerable people each Wednesday and Friday.

There are two washing machines and hot showers in constant use, and we provide food, clothes and sleeping bags for those who need them.

Our professional staff work with other agencies to help our service users move on, and our IT support is proving crucial in supporting applications for jobs and benefits.

Our services are needed as much as they were ten years ago.

The 10th Anniversary Event and Annual General Meeting (AGM) is an opportunity for our supporters to join us and learn more about our plans for the future. All warmly welcome on Monday 13 October in the Salvation Army at 109 Kingston Road, SW19 3LT. Event at 5.30pm preceded by AGM at 5pm.



Help with moving on ...

We work closely with Fresh Start Housing, and since March have helped six service users move into local accommodation.

IT Support

Our computers are in such demand that we have bought two more laptops, so that our service users can have on-line access to relevant agencies and use the internet for information they need.

Professional advice

We welcome Caroline from Job Centre Plus who is providing professional advice about looking for work and help with access to benefits. Caroline is an outreach worker, and comes to the Drop-In once a week to help service users with their on-line applications for Job Seekers Allowance, the certificates required by employers in the building trade, and available benefits from the Department of Work and Pensions.

Working with Winter Night Shelters

Last winter a total of 30 people stayed at the Night Shelters run by Merton faith groups from the Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities. Fourteen venues were used for overnight accommodation on a rota basis, and this winter there will be the same number. 25 of the 30 Winter Night Shelter guests were referrals from the Drop-In, highlighting the close relationship between the Drop-In and the Night Shelters.

Staff and Volunteers

Andy our Manager and the wonderful Wednesday cooks at work.



CASE Study: Paul's story

"I arrived back in this country after a gap of 5 years penniless and homeless. After spending a few nights on a friend's couch, I discovered Faith in Action on the internet and went for help to the Kingston Road Drop-In. The people at the Drop-In were wonderful. They gave me a warm welcome, a hot meal and without being judgemental offered friendship and support. They found me a place in the Winter Night Shelters and for 3 months I had a roof over my head.

At the Drop-In I could also do my laundry and have a hot shower. When the Night Shelters closed in March, Faith in Action gave me a very good warm sleeping bag for the time I had to sleep rough while they helped me find accommodation. They introduced me to Fresh Start Housing and now I have somewhere to live and am getting back on my feet. I don't go to the Drop-In now because I have moved on, but I am very grateful to the advice, help and support that the staff and volunteers gave me."

Business support

We are very grateful to Nandos in the Broadway, Sainsburys in Kingston Road, and Wimbledon Studios for their food contributions to the Drop-In. Contributions like these make a real difference.

Funding the work of the Drop-In

To ensure that we continue to provide and develop services for the homeless and vulnerably housed we need support from across the local community, businesses and faith groups. We are very grateful to those who are supporting us.

We are seeking to broaden the support of those who contribute to our Square Meal Appeal – a monthly donation of £5 can provide two square meals for our service users – across the faith communities, local communities and businesses in Merton. For how to give please visit our website.

Further Information

To learn more about the Drop-In and how you can help, contact Andy our project manager on 07843 280419 or email faithinaction@wimbledonguild.co.uk or visit our website.

www.mertonfaithinaction.org